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LETTER DATED 25 JANUARY 1994 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I would like to bring to the attention of the members of the Security Council the extremely dangerous escalation of events in Nagorny Karabakh, which has been the direct consequence of the four-week-long Azerbaijani aggression.

As I have already informed you, on 24 December 1993 the Azerbaijani armed forces, with heavy military vehicles, long-range artillery, missile launchers and aircraft, launched one of the largest-scale attacks to date on the Karabakh self-defence units along the entire front line stretching from the Shahumian region in the far north of Nagorny Karabakh to the town of Zhdanovsk in the south. The fierce battles have reportedly caused hundreds of deaths and thousands of people wounded on both sides.

The situation is deteriorating not only as a result of the unprecedented scope of the offensive, but also because Azerbaijan has hired a large number of mercenaries from neighbouring countries as well as mujahidin fighters loyal to the hard-line Hezb-el-Islami party of Afghanistan. The latter fact was covered in the 26 December 1993 Boston Globe article by Reuters.

On the assumption that the Russian-mediated cease-fire agreement was still in effect on the day Azerbaijan launched the offensive, the Armenian leadership has used its good offices in Nagorny Karabakh, discouraging Stepanakert from countermeasures and trying to keep the conflict from further escalation, which would inevitably ruin all peaceful initiatives on the part of the United Nations, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Russian Federation, the United States and the international community.

None the less, the recent developments have left no doubt that the Azerbaijani Government, repudiating the possibility of peace talks, has once and for all decided to resolve the Karabakh problem by force. Evidence of this is its repeated attempts to gain territory within Nagorny Karabakh in order, first, to solve its domestic problems, and, second, to have some advantages at the negotiating table.

Since late December, Azerbaijan has been shelling and rocketing the Armenian towns and villages along almost the entire Armenian-Azeri border, sometimes making attempts to invade Armenian territory. This has been done with the sole purpose of engaging Armenia in an all-out war, thus justifying its own propaganda about Armenian aggression.

Not coincidentally, the terrorist activities in the Azeri-populated regions of Georgia against the gas pipeline and the railway, which in fact was the only route connecting the blockaded Armenia with the outside world, reached their peak in this most recent period. We have evidence of the direct involvement of the Azerbaijani authorities in the recent explosions.

This flagrant violation of all previous agreements and open disregard of United Nations Security Council resolutions 874 (1993) and 884 (1993) are taking place at a time when the Armenian Government is urgently seeking ways for a peaceful settlement of this conflict.

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned, I believe the United Nations Security Council should use its status and authority to help to stop the bloodshed in the region of conflict and promote the process of peaceful negotiations.

I should be grateful if you would circulate this letter as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Alexander ARZOUMANIAN
Permanent Representative